1   Title: A HUMAN GENE RELATED TO BUT DISTINCT

2   FROM EGF RECEPTOR GENE

3   Background of the Invention

4   Technical Field

5   The present invention is related to the cloning,

6   isolation and partial characterization of a hitherto

7   unidentified human gene. More particularly, the present

8   invention is related to the preparation and

9   identification of a v-erbB related human gene that is a

10   new member of the tyrosine kinase encoding family of

11   genes and is amplified in a human mammary carcinoma.

12   State of the Art

13   A number of genes have been identified as retroviral

14   oncogenes that are responsible for inducing tumors in

15   vivo and transforming cells in vitro (Land et al.,

16   Science 222:771-778, 1983). Some of them apparently

17   encode transforming proteins that share a kinase domain

1   homologous to that of pp60^{src}, a tyrosine-specific protein

2   kinase. The cellular cognate, encoded by the c-src gene,

3   also exhibits tyrosine-specific kinase activity. Of

4   particular interest is the fact that tyrosine-specific

5   kinases are also encoded by other genes for

6   several receptors for polypeptide growth factors,

7   including the receptors for epidermal growth factor (EGF)

8   (Cohen et al., J. Biol. Chem. 255:4834-4842, 1980),

9   platelet-derived growth factor (PDGF) (Nishimura et al.,

10   Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 79:4303-4307, 1982), insulin

11   (Kasuga et al., Nature 298:667-669, 1982), and

12   insulin-like growth factor I (Rubin et al., Nature

13   305:438-440, 1983). This implies a possible link between

14   the action of the growth factor-receptor complex and the

15   oncogene products with tyrosine-specific kinase activity.

16   Recent analysis of the v-erbB gene and the EGF

17   receptor gene indicates that the v-erbB gene is a part of

18   the EGF receptor gene and codes for the internal domain

19   and transmembrane portion of the receptor (Yamamoto et

20   al., Cell 35:71-78, 1983; Downward et al., Nature

21   307:521-527, 1984; Ullrich et al., Nature 309:418-425,

22   1984). These findings, together with the extensive

23   identity of the amino acid sequences of the v-sis protein

24   and platelet-derived growth factor (Waterfield et al.,

1 Nature 304:35-39, 1983; Doolittle et al., Science

2 221:275-277, 1983), suggest that some viral oncogene

3 products mimic the action of the polypeptide growth

4 factor-receptor complex in activating a cellular pathway

5 involved in cell proliferation and tumor formation.

6   Genetic alterations affecting proto-oncogenes of the

7 tyrosine kinase family may play a role in spontaneous

8 tumor development. A specific translocation affecting

9 the c-abl locus, for example, is associated with chronic

10 myelogenous leukemia (de Klein et al., Nature 300:765,

11 1982; Collins et al., Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 80:4813,

12 1983). Several recent studies have also documented

13 amplification or rearrangement of the gene for the EGF

14 receptor in certain human tumors (Libermann et al.,

15 Nature 313:144, 1985), or tumor cell lines (Ullrich et

16 al., Nature 309:418, 1984; Lin et al., Science 224:843,

17 1984). However, a gene that is a new member of the

18 tyrosine kinase family and is amplified in a human

19 mammary carcinoma and is closely related to, but distinct

20 from the EGF receptor gene, has not heretofore been known.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is, therefore, an object of the present invention to provide a novel, cloned, human gene having the nucleotide sequence as shown in Fig. 1 and described more fully herein *infra*.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide products, e.g. various RNAs and/or polypeptides encoded by the cloned gene.

It is a still further object of the present invention to provide antibodies, either polyclonal or monoclonal, directed against the protein product encoded by said gene and a diagnostic kit containing said antibodies for the detection of carcinomas.

It is another object of the present invention to provide complementary DNA (cDNA) clones homologous to the messenger RNA (mRNA) encoded by the cloned gene, said cDNA clones being capable of expressing large amounts of corresponding protein in a heterologous vector system, such as bacteria, yeast, eukaryotes and the like.

It is yet another object of the present invention to produce a transformed cell or organism capable of

1 expressing said gene by incorporating said gene or a part

2 thereof into the genome of said cell, vector or organism.

3 It is a still further object of the present

4 invention to provide nucleic acid probes and/or antibody

5 reagent kits capable of detecting said gene or a product

6 thereof.

7 Other objects and advantages of the present

8 invention will become apparent as the detailed

9 description of the invention proceeds.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

11 These and other objects, features and many of the

12 attendant advantages of the invention will be better

13 understood upon a reading of the following detailed

14 description when considered in connection with the

15 accompanying drawings wherein:

16 Fig. 1 shows a characteristic fragment produced by

17 EcoRI restriction of the cloned gene of the present

18 invention; detection of v-erbB- and pMAC 117-specific

19 gene fragments in normal human placenta, A431 cells, or

20 human mammary carcinoma MAC117. DNA (15 µg) was cleaved

21 with Eco RI, separated by electrophoresis in agarose

1   gels, and transferred to nitrocellulose paper (<u>Southern</u>

2   J. Mol. Biol. <u>98</u>:503, 1975). Hybridization to the

3   ^{32}P-labeled probe (<u>Rigby et al</u>., J. Mol. Biol. <u>113</u>:237,

4   1977) was conducted in a solution of 40 percent

5   formamide, 0.75M NaCl, 0.075M sodium citrate, at 42°C

6   (<u>Wahl et al</u>., Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 76:3683, 1979).

7   The v-erbB probe (A) was a mixture of the 0.5-kbp Bam

8   HI-Bam HI fragment and 0.5-kbp Bam HI-Eco RI fragment of

9   avian erythroblastosis proviral DNA. The pMAC117 probe

10   (B) was a 1-kbp Bgl I-Bam HI fragment. After

11   hybridization, the blots were washed first in 0.3M NaCl

12   plus 0.03M sodium citrate at room temperature, and then

13   in 0.015M NaCl, 0.0015M sodium citrate, and 0.1 percent

14   sodium dodecyl sulfate at 42°C (A) or at 52°C (B).

15   Hybridization was detected by autoradiography.

16   Fig. 2 shows the gel electrophoretic properties of

17   specific gene fragments; Restriction-site map of MAC117

18   and plasmid pMAC117. A, Acc 1; B, Bam HI; Bg, Bgl I; N,

19   Nco I; R, Eco RI; X, Xba I; Xh, Xho I. The sites were

20   located by electrophoretic analysis of the products of

21   single and double digestion. Regions homologous to

22   v-erbB or human repetitive sequences (region flanked by

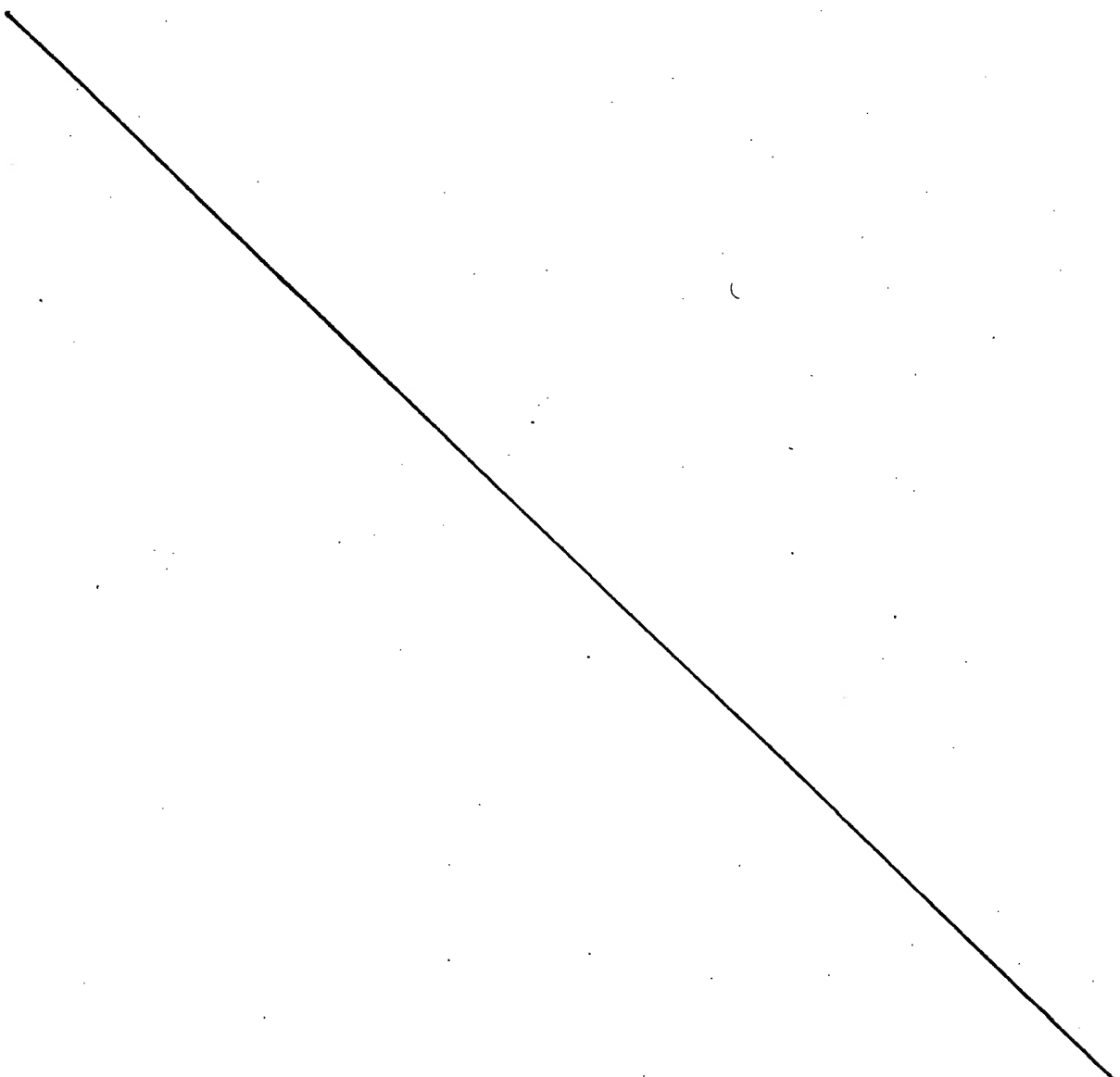23   arrows) were located by Southern blot hybridization

1   (Southern, J. Mol. Biol. 98:503, 1975)with the v-erb B

2   probe or total human DNA made radioactive by nick

3   translation (Rigby et al., J. Mol. Biol. 113:237, 1977).

4   Hybridization conditions were as described in Fig. 1A.

5   The nucleotide sequence of pMAC117 between the Acc I site

6   and the Nco I sites and regions of encoded amino acid

7   sequence homologous to the EGF receptor are shown. The

8   AG or GT dinucleotides flanking the putative coding

9   regions are underlined. To determine the sequence, Nco

10 I, Hinf I, and Sau 96 I fragments were labeled at the 3'

11 termini by means of the large fragment of E. coli DNA

12 polymerase, separated into single strands by gel

13 electrophoresis, and chemically degraded (Maxam et al.,

14 Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 74:560, 1977).

15   Fig. 3 shows a comparison of the putative encoded

16 amino acid sequence of various polypeptide products, and

17 comparison of the putative encoded amino acid sequence in

18 pMAC117 with known tyrosine kinase sequences. Black

19 regions represent homologous amino acids. Differing

20 amino acid residues are shown in one-letter code (A,

21 alanine; C. cysteine, D. aspartic acid; E. glutamic acid;

22 F. phenylalanine; G. glycine; H. histidine; I.

23 isoleucine; K. lysine; L. leucine; M. methionine;

1 N. asparagine; P. proline; Q. glutamine; R. arginine; S.

2 serine; T. threonine; V. valine; W. tryptophan; Y.

3 tyrosine). Amino acid positions conserved in all

4 sequences are denoted by *. The tyrosine homologous to

5 that autophosphorylated by the v-src protein (Smart et

6 al., Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 78:6013, 1981) is shown

7 by an arrow. The v-abl sequence contains a tyrosine

8 residue in this region displaced by two positions. The

9 amino acid sequences of human EGF receptor, v-src, v-abl,

10 v-fms, and human insulin receptor were aligned by the

11 computer program described by Ullrich et al., Nature

12 313:756, 1985 which is incorporated herein by reference.

13 The homology observed with the predicted amino acid

14 sequences of v-yes and v-fes was 51 percent and 48

15 percent, respectively.

16 Fig. 4 shows the distinction between λMAC117 and

17 human EGF receptor genes by the

18 detection of distinct messenger RNA species derived from

19 the λMAC117 gene and the human EGF receptor gene.

20 Polyadenylated messenger RNA of A431 cells was separated

21 by denaturing gel electrophoresis in formaldehyde

22 (Lehrach et al., Biochemistry 16:4743, 1977), transferred

23 to nitrocellulose (Southern, J. Mol. Biol. 98:503, 1975),

24 and hybridized under stringent conditions (50 percent

25 formamide, 0.75 M NaCl, 0.075M sodium citrate, at 42°C)

1   with ^{32}P-labeled probe from pMAC117 (Bgl I-Bam HI

2   fragment) or human EGF receptor complementary DNA (pE7) pE7s

3   2-kb Cla I inserted fragment). Filters were washed under

4   conditions of high stringency (0.015M NaCl plus 0.0015M

5   sodium citrate at 55°C). Hybridization was detected by

6   autoradiography with exposure times of 4 hours for the

7   pMAC117 probe and 1 hour for the human EGF receptor

8   probe.

Fig. 5A shows the restriction map of complementary DNA of MAC117 encompassing
the entire coding region of the gene. Clone pMAC137 was isolated from an
oligo dT primed normal human fibroblast cDNA library (Okyama et al., Mol. Cell.
Biol. 3, 280, 1983) using a 0.8-kbp Acc I fragment from the 3' terminus of pMAC117 as probe.
Clones λMAC30, λMAC10', and λMAC14-1 were subsequently isolated from a
randomly primed MCF-7 cDNA library (Walter et al., Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci.
USA, 82, 7889, 1985) using cDNA fragments as probes. Restriction sites:
B - Bam HI, BII - Bst EII, E - Eco RI, N - NCO I, P - Pst I, Sm - Sma I,
Sp - Sph I, and St - Stu I.

Fig. 6 shows the overexpression of MAC117 in RNA in human mammary tumor cell
lines. (A) Northern blot analysis. Total cellular RNA (10 μg) of mammary
tumor cell lines, normal fibroblasts M413 and HBL100 was hybridized with a
cDNA probe derived from the 5' end of the coding region (Fig. 5B, probe a).
M413 and HBL100 cells contain specific mRNA detectable after longer autora-
diographic exposures. Similar results were obtained when probe b or c
(Fig. 5B) was employed for hybridization. (B) Quantitation of mRNA levels.
Serial 2-fold dilutions of total RNA were applied to nitrocellulose. Replicate
filters were hybridized with either a cDNA probe (Fig. 5B, probe b) or human β-
actin which served as control for RNA amounts present on the nitrocellulose
filter. Relative amounts detected with each probe are indicated in comparison
to the hybridization signals observed in normal human fibroblast M413.

Fig. 7 shows the 185-kDal protein specific for MAC117 and its overexpression
in human mammary tumor cell lines. 40 μg total cellular protein was separated
by electrophoresis and transferred to nitrocellulose filters. The protein was
detected with an antipeptide antibody coupled to ^{125}I protein A. The

specificity of antibody detection was determined by pre-incubation of the antibody with excess amounts of peptide prior to immunodetection. (+) preincubation with peptide, (-) no peptide. In panel B, nonspecific bands at 100 kd are observed in longer exposures of peptide blocked immunoblots (panel A).

Fig. 8 shows the gene amplification of MAC117 in 4 mammary tumor cell lines and the absence of MAC117 gene amplification in 4 other mammary tumor cell lines overexpressing MAC117 mRNA. (A) Southern blot analysis. For each line 10 µg genomic DNA were restricted with Xba I and hybridized with a probe comprising the entire coding region of MAC117 (Fig. 5B, probe c). Hind III restriction fragments of lambda DNA served as mol. wt. standards. (B) DNA dot-blot analysis. Genomic DNA (10 µg) digested with Eco RI was applied in serial 2-fold dilutions to nitrocellulose filters. Filters were hybridized either with a probe specific for MAC117 (Fig. 5B, probe b) or mos, which served as a control for DNA amounts applied to replicate nitrocellulose filters. Gene copy numbers of MAC117 relative to M413 indicate the minimal extent of gene amplification detected in DNA from mammary tumor cell lines.

Fig. 9 depicts the construction of expression vectors for the human MAC117 cDNA. A Nco I-Mst II fragment encompassing the entire open reading frame was cloned under the transcriptional control of either the SV40 early promoter or MuLV LTR. Symbols: ▨ , erbA-erbB intergenic region of pAEV11 containing the 3' splice acceptor site; N = Nco I, Sp = Sph I, M = Mst II, St = Stu I, H = Hind III, Sm = Sma I, P = Pst I, B = BamH I, X = Xho I. Sites indicated in parenthesis were not reconstituted after the cloning procedures.

Table 1 compares transformation characteristics of NIH/3T3 cells transfected with vectors generating different expression levels of the MAC117 coding sequence.

Table 1.

DNA transfectant[a]	Specific transforming activity[b] (ffu/pM)	Colony-forming efficiency in agar (%)[c]	Cell number required for 50% tumor incidence[d]
LTR-1/MAC117	4.1×10^4	45	10^3
SV40/MAC117	$<10^0$	<0.01	$>10^6$
LTR/erbB	5.0×10^2	20	5×10^4
LTR/ras	3.6×10^4	35	10^3
pSV2/gpt	$<10^0$	<0.01	$>10^6$

[a]All transfectants were isolated from plates which received 1 μg cloned DNA and were selected by their ability to grow in the presence of killer HAT medium (Mulligan et al., Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 78, 2072, 1981).

[b]Focus-forming units were adjusted to ffu/pM of cloned DNA added based on the relative molecular weights of the respective plasmids.

[c]Cells were plated at 10-fold serial dilutions in 0.33% soft agar medium containing 10% calf serum. Visible colonies comprising >100 cells were scored at 14 days.

[d]NFR nude mice were inoculated subcutaneously with each cell line. Ten mice were tested at cell concentrations ranging from 10^6 ~~to 10^{-3}~~ to 10^3 cells/mouse. Tumor formation was monitored at least twice weekly for up to 30 days.

Fig. 10 shows the comparison of the levels of MAC117 proteins in LTR-1/erbB-2 transformed NIH/3T3 cells and human mammary tumor lines by immunoblot analysis. Varying amounts of total cellular protein were separated by electrophoresis and transferred to nitrocellulose filters. The MAC117 protein was detected with rabbit anti-peptide serum coupled to ^{125}I protein A as previously described.

9 ## DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF INVENTION

10   The above and other objects and advantages of the
11 present invention are achieved by a cloned human gene
12 having the nucleotide sequence as shown in Fig. 1.
13 Although any methods and materials similar or equivalent
14 to those described herein can be used in the practice or
15 testing of the present invention, the preferred methods
16 and materials are now described. All publications
17 mentioned under the "Brief Description of Drawings" and
18 hereunder are incorporated herein by reference. Unless
19 defined otherwise, all technical or scientific terms used
20 herein have the same meaning as commonly understood by
21 one of ordinary skill in the art to which this invention
22 belongs.

1   <u>Cells and Tissues</u>:

2   <u>Preparation of High Molecular Weight DNA</u>

3   1.   <u>From A431 cells</u>:

4   A431 carcinoma cells were established in culture and

5   maintained in Dulbecco's modified Eagle's medium with 10%

6   fetal calf serum.

7   Cells were grown to 90% confluence in four 175 cm^2

8   tissue culture flasks, washed twice with phosphate

9   buffered saline (Gibco Biochemicals), then lysed in 10 mM

10   Tris (pH 7.5), 150 mM NaCl, 50 mM ethylenediamine-

11   tetraacetate (EDTA) and 0.5% sodium dodecyl sulfate

12   (SDS). Proteinase K (Boehinger Mannheim) was added to a

13   concentration of 0.1 mg/ml and the cell extracts digested

14   for 3 hours at 50°C. DNA was extracted 3 times with

15   phenol and once with CHCl$_3$. DNA was precipitated with 2

16   volumes of ethanol, spooled and resuspended in 20 ml of

17   10 mM Tris-HCl (pH 7.5), 1 mM EDTA. The solution was

18   then made 10 μg/ml with (DNase free) RNase (Boehinger

19   Mannheim) and incubated for 2 hr at 50°C. NaCl was added

20   to 0.5 M and the solution extracted with phenol followed

21   by CHCl$_3$. DNA was precipitated with 2 volumes of

22   ethanol, spooled, and resuspended in 10 mM Tris, 1 mM

23   EDTA. The concentration was determined by routine

24   spectrophotometric procedure at 260 nm wavelength.

1   2. <u>From tissues</u>:

2   Two grams original mass of primary tumor (designated

3 MAC117 obtained from Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer

4 Center Specimen code 31-26606) ~~was~~ *were* pulverized in a mortar

5 and pestle at liquid nitrogen temperature, suspended in

6 10 ml of 10 mM Tris-HCl (pH 7.5), 150 mM NaCl, 2 mM EDTA,

7 reacted with proteinase K at 500 μg/ml (Boehinger

8 Mannheim) and SDS at 0.5% at 37°C for 10 hr. The

9 solution was then extracted twice with phenol and twice

10 with the mixture of phenol:$CHCl_3$: isoamyl alcohol at

11 25:24:1 and once with $CHCl_3$:isoamyl alcohol (24:1). DNA

12 was precipitated by 2 volumes of ethanol removed by

13 spooling, and resuspended in 1 mM Tris-HCl (pH 7.5), 0.2

14 mM EDTA.

15   <u>Electrophoretic analysis of DNA fragments using</u>
16   <u>"Southern hybridization"</u>

17   1. <u>Restriction enzyme cleavage</u>

18   Each sample of DNA (15 μg) was digested in 0.4 ml of

19 100 mM Tris-HCl (pH 7.5), 50 mM NaCl, 5 mM $MgCl_2$,

20 100 ug/ml bovine serum albumin and 30 units of

21 restriction enzyme (New England Biolabs) for 2 hr at

22 37°C. Following reaction, 10 μg of tRNA was added and

23 the solution extracted once with an equal volume of a

24 mixture of phenol and $CHCl_3$ (1:1). Nucleic acids were

1 precipitated from the aqueous phase by addition of 2

2 volumes of ethanol. Following centrifugation for 10 min

3 at 12,000 x g (Eppendorf microfuge) the samples were

4 washed once with 80% ethanol, dried to remove ethanol,

5 and resuspended in 40 μl distilled H_2O.

6   2. <u>Agarose gel electrophoresis</u>

7   DNA samples were made   40 mM Tris acetate (pH

8 7.2), 20 mM Na acetate, 1 mM EDTA, 5.0% glycerol, 0.05%

9 bromophenol blue. Electrophoresis was conducted in a BRL

10 H4 apparatus containing 400 ml 0.8% agarose, 40 mM Tris

11 acetate (pH 7.2), 20 mM Na acetate, 1 mM EDTA and 1 μg/ml

12 ethidium bromide for about 16 hr at about 50 volts

13 following conventional procedure. DNA was detected by

14 irradiation with ultraviolet light.

15   3. <u>Transfer to nitrocellulose</u>

16   The agarose gel was treated twice for 15 min in 1

17 liter of 0.5 M NaOH, 1.5 M NaCl, then twice for 30 min

18 with 1 M NH_4Ac, 20 mM NaOH. The agarose gel was then

19 placed on a stack of filter paper saturated with 1 liter

20 of 1 M NH_4Ac, 20 mM NaOH. A sheet of nitrocellulose

21 membrane (0.45 μm pore size Schleicher & Schuell) was

22 placed on top of the gel followed by dry filter paper.

23 Transfer was allowed to occur overnight. DNA was fixed

24 to nitrocellulose by baking at 80°C in vacuo for 2 hr.

1 Hybridization to RNA and DNA blots

2 Hybridization was conducted in 20 ml of 40%

3 formamide, 0.75 M NaCl, 0.075 M Na citrate, 0.05% BSA,

4 0.05% polyvinyl pyrolidone, 0.05% Ficol 400 and 20 µg/ml

5 sheared denatured calf thymus DNA. All hybridization was

6 conducted for 16 hr at 42°C in a water bath. Following

7 hybridization, nitrocellulose membranes were washed 2

8 times for 20 min in 1 liter of 0.3M NaCl, 30 mM Na

9 citrate, followed by washes in 15 mM NaCl, 1.5 mM Na

10 citrate, first with and then without 0.1% sodium dodecyl

11 sulfate. These final washes were at 42°C for v-erbB

12 probes and at 52°C with pMAC117 and pE7 probes, vide

13 infra. Autoradiography was conducted at -70°C with Kodak

14 XAR5 film. Exposure times were 2 hr for Fig. 1A and 20

15 min for Fig. 1AB, 40 min for EGF receptor probe on Fig.

16 4, and 4 hr for the pMAC117 probe of Fig. 4.

17 Generation of

18 A nucleic acid probe is defined as a fragment of DNA

19 or RNA whose nucleotide sequence has at least partial

20 identity with the sequence of the gene or its messenger

21 RNA so as to enable detection or identification of the

22 gene. Since a gene may have several fragments, there

23 could be a plurality of probes for detecting the gene.

24 The probes used were the 0.5-kb Bam HI to Bam HI

25 fragment combined with the 0.5-kb Bam HI to Eco RI

1   fragment of the v-erbB gene of AEV 11; the 1-kb BglI to

2   Bam HI fragment of pMAC117; and the 2-kb Cla I fragment

3   of pE7 as described by Xu, et al., (Nature 309:806, 1984).

4   DNA

5   fragments were isolated by gel electrophoresis in 1% low

6   melting point agarose gels (Bethesda Research Labs) in 40

7   mM Tris acetate, 20 mM Na acetate, 1 mM EDTA, followed by

8   melting of the gel at $70^\circ C$ and extraction with phenol

9   followed by $CHCl_3$ and ethanol precipitation. DNAs were

10   made radioactive by using a nick-translation kit

11   (Amersham) in which 50 µl reactions contained 250 µCi

12    $\alpha P^{32}dCTP$ (Amersham) and 0.5 µg DNA. Radioactive probe

13   DNA was purified from unincorporated nucleotides by 2

14   cycles of ethanol precipitation. Yields were above 2 x

15   10^8 cpm/µg DNA. Before hybridization all probes were

16   made single-stranded by treatment with 90% formamide.

17   RNA electrophoresis and transfer to nitrocellulose

18   RNA samples (5 µg A431 polyadenylated RNA, obtained

19   from National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD 21218)

20   were treated for 5 min at $50^\circ C$ in 50% formamide, 6.7%

21   formaldehyde, 20 mM Mops (pH 7.0) (Sigma Biochemicals), 5

22   mM Na acetate, 1 mM EDTA in 25 µl total volume.

23   Electrophoresis was conducted in BRL H4 apparatus in

24   250ml of 1.5% agarose, 20 mM Mops (pH 7.0), 5 mM Na

1   acetate, 1 mM EDTA, 1 μg/ml ethidium bromide at 40 volts

2   for 16 hr. RNA was detected using ultraviolet light. The

3   gel was soaked for 30 min at $20°C$ in 50 mM NaOH, followed

4   by two 30 min washes in 1 M Tris (pH 7.5), followed by 30

5   min in 3 M NaCl, 0.3 M Na citrate. Transfer to

6   nitro-cellulose was accomplished by placing the gel atop

7   a stack of filter paper saturated with 1.5 M NaCl, 0.15 M

8   Na citrate, followed by 0.45 μM pore size nitrocellulose

9   (Schleicher and Schuell), followed by dry filter paper.

10   Transfer was allowed to proceed for 16 hr. The

11   nitrocellulose filter was washed twice for 20 min in 0.3

12   M NaCl, 30 mM Na citrate. RNA was fixed to the paper by

13   baking at $80°C$ in vacuo for 2 hr.

14   <u>DNA sequence analysis</u>

15   DNA fragments containing the AccI-NcoI region

16   (Fig. 1) were digested with either Nco I, Hinf I or Sau

17   96I (New England Biolabs). These fragments were end-

18   labeled in reactions of 50 μl containing 50 mM Tris-HCl

19   (pH 7.2), 10 mM $MgCl_2$, 0.1 mM dithiothreitol, 50 μg/ml

20   BSA, 10 μCi α ^{32}P dXTP (Amersham--where x represents the

21   correct nucleotide for fill-in), 2 units <u>E. coli</u> DNA

22   polymerase large fragment (New England Biolabs).

23   Following labeling, single-stranded material was prepared

24   by electrophoresis. Samples were denatured in 30%

1   dimethyl sulfoxide, 1 mM EDTA and 0.05% bromophenol blue

2   at 90°C for 2 hr. Samples were chilled and

3   electrophoresed in acrylamide gels in a Bethesda Research

4   Labs apparatus. DNA was detected by autoradiography and

5   isolated by elution into 10 mM Tris-HCl (pH 7.0), 1 mM

6   EDTA. Chemical degradation of DNA for sequence analysis

7   was conducted using standard procedures. · Cleavage at

8   guanine (G) residues was conducted by reaction with

9   dimethyl sulfonate at 22°C for 10 min. Cleavage at

10   adenine (A) residues was conducted by 12 min reaction at

11   90°C in 1.5 M NaOH, 1 mM EDTA. Cleavage at cytosine (C)

12   residues was conducted using hydrazine in 2 M NaCl for 13

13   min at 22°C. Cleavage at thymine (T) residues was

14   conducted using hydrazine with no added NaCl for 10 min

15   at 22°C. Following cleavage, all reactions were twice

16   precipitated using ethanol and thoroughly dried. All

17   samples were reacted with 1 M piperidine at 90°C for 30

18   min. Piperidine was removed by evaporation in a Savant

19   speed vac concentrator. Fragments were separated by

20   electrophoresis in acrylamide gels (BRL HO apparatus) in

21   8 M urea, 50 mM Tris-borate (pH 8.3), 1 mM EDTA.

22   Detection of degraded ladder was by autoradiography using

23   Kodak XAR5 film at -70°C.

1   Cloning of λMAC117

2   High molecular weight DNA (6 μg) from tumor MAC117

3   (see above) was digested with 12 units restriction enzyme

4   Eco RI (New England Biolabs) in a volume of 100 ul for

5   about one hour at 37°C. DNA was obtained by phenol CHCl$_3$

6   extraction and ethanol precipitation and resuspended in

7   water at a concentration of 0.1 μg/ml. This DNA (0.2 μg)

8   was ligated to λwes λB arms (Bethesda Research Labs)

9   (1 μg) using T4 DNA ligase (New England Biolabs) in a

10   total volume of 20 ml [50 mM Tris-HCl pH 7.4, 10 mM MgCl$_2$

11   10 mM dithiothretol, 0.5 mM spermidine, 1 mM ATP]. This

12   mixture of ligated DNAs was packaged into infectious

13   bacteriophage particles using the Packagene system

14   (Promega Biotec).   These particles were used to infect

15   bacteria BNN45 and about 8 x 10^5 individual phage plaques

16   were obtained.

17   These phage plaques were screened for individual

18   plaques containing DNA homologous to the v-erbB probes

19   (described above) using standard procedures. Briefly,

20   bacterial culture plaques containing approximately 15,000

21   plaques were grown overnight. Sterile nitrocellulose

22   discs (Scheicher and Schuell) were applied to the dish,

23   removed and allowed to air dry for about 90 minutes. The

1   discs were then treated with 0.2 M NaOH, 1.5 M NaCl

2   followed by 0.4 M Tris-HCl pH 7.5 followed by 0.3 M NaCl

3   0.03 M Na citrate and baked in vacuo for two hours at

4   80°C. These discs were then exposed to hybridization and

5   washing conditions identical to those described for Fig.

6   2 using the identical v-erbB probe. Washing conditions

7   were also identical to those for Fig. 2. Hybridization

8   was detected by autoradiography at -70°C for 16 hours.

9   Single hybridizing phage plaques were obtained by three

10   successive hybridization experiments (as described above)

11   to isolate a pure phage culture.

12   ~~To clone the 6-kbp fragment,~~ DNA from MAC117 was

13   digested with Eco RI, then ligated into bacteriophage

14   λgtWES, packaged in vitro, and transferred to Escherichia

15   coli (E. coli) strain BNN45 by infection following

16   standard techniques well known in the art. A library of

17   4×10^{5} bacteriophages was screened by plaque

18   hybridization with radioactive v-erbB DNA. Ten of 14

19   hybridizing phages contained a 6-kbp Eco RI fragment.

20   Figure 1 shows the physical map of one of these phages,

21   λMAC117, and pMAC117, a PUC12 subclone containing a 2-kbp

22   Bam HI fragment of λMAC117 that hybridized with v-erbB

23   probes. The region of pMAC 117 to which v-erbB

24   hybridized most intensely was flanked by Acc I and Nco I

25   sites. Human repetitive sequences were also localized

26   (Fig. 1, region demarcated by arrows).

1   A deposit of pMAC117 cloned in E. coli has been made

2   at the American Type Culture Collection (ATCC), Bethesda,

3   Md. under accession number 53408. Upon issuance of a

4   patent, the culture will continue to be maintained for at

5   least 30 years and made available to the public without

6   restriction subject, of course, to the provisions of the

7   law in this respect.

8   As shown in Fig. 2A, DNA prepared from tissue of a

9   human mammary carcinoma, MAC117, showed a pattern of

10   hybridization that differed both from that observed with

11   DNA of normal human placenta and from that observed with

12   the A431 squamous-cell carcinoma line, which contains

13   amplified epidermal growth factor (EGF) receptor genes.

14   In A431 DNA, four Eco RI fragments were detected that had

15   increased signal intensities compared to those of

16   corresponding fragments in placenta DNA (Fig. 2A). In

17   contrast, MAC117 DNA contained a single 6-kilobase pair

18   (kbp) fragment, which appeared to be amplified compared

19   to corresponding fragments observed in both A431 and

20   placenta DNA's (Fig. 2A). These findings indicate that

21   the MAC117 tumor contained an amplified DNA sequence

22   related to, but distinct from, the cellular erbB

23   proto-oncogene.

1   By digestion of pMAC117 with Bgl I and Bam HI, it

2   was possible to generate a single-copy probe homologous

3   to v-erbB. This probe detected a 6-kb Eco RI fragment

4   that was amplified in MAC117 DNA and apparently increased

5   in A431 cellular DNA relative to normal DNA (Fig. 3B).

6   The sizes of the fragment corresponded to the amplified

7   6-kb Eco RI fragment detected in MAC117 DNA by means of

8   v-erbB (Fig. 3A). Hybridization to Southern blots

9. containing serial dilutions of MAC117 genomic DNA

10   indicated an approximate amplification of 5- to 10-fold

11   when compared to human placenta DNA.

12   The nucleotide sequence of the portion of pMAC117

13   located between the Nco I and Acc I sites contained two

14   regions of nucleotide sequence homologous to v-erbB

15   separated by 122 nucleotides (Fig. 4). These regions

16   shared 69 percent nucleotide sequence identity with both

17   the v-erbB and the human EGF receptor gene. The

18   predicted amino acid sequence of these regions was 85

19   percent homologous to two regions that are contiguous in

20   the EGF receptor sequence. Furthermore, these two

21   putative coding regions of the MAC117 sequence were each

22   flanked by the AG and GT dinucleotides that border the

23   exons of eukaryotic genes. These findings suggest that

24   the sequence shown in Fig. 4 represents two exons,

25   separated by an intron of a gene related to the erbB/EGF

26   receptor gene.

1   The predicted amino acid sequence of the λMAC117

2   putative exons is homologous to the corresponding

3   sequences of several members of the tyrosine kinase

4   family. The most striking homology was observed with the

5   human EGF receptor or erbB (Fig. 3). In addition, 42

6   percent to 52 percent homology with the predicted amino

7   acid sequences of other tyrosine kinase-encoding genes

8   was observed. At 25 percent of the positions there was

9   identity among all the sequences analyzed (Fig. 3). A

10   tyrosine residue in the λMAC117 putative coding sequence,

11   conserved among the tyrosine kinases analyzed, is the

12   site of autophosphorylation of the src protein (Smart et

13   al., Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA. 78:6013, 1981).

14   The availability of cloned probes of the MAC117 gene

15   made it possible to investigate its expression in a

16   variety of cell types. The MAC117 probe detected a

17   single 5-kb transcript in A431 cells (Fig. 4). Under the

18   stringent conditions of hybridization utilized, this

19   probe did not detect any of the three RNA species

20   recognized by EGF receptor complementary DNA. Thus,

21   MAC117 represents a new functional gene within the

22   tyrosine kinase family, closely related to, but distinct

23   from the gene encoding the EGF receptor.

1   There is precedent for the identification of genes

2   related to known oncogenes on the basis of their

3   amplification in human tumors. For example, the high

4   degree of amplification of N-myc in certain malignancies

5   made it detectable by means of the myc gene as a

6   molecular probe (Schwab, Nature 305:245, 1983; Kohl et

7   al., Cell 35:349, 1983). In the present study, a five-

8   to tenfold amplification of a v-erbB-related gene in the

9   MAC117 mammary carcinoma made it possible to identify

10   this sequence against a complex pattern of EFG receptor

11   gene fragments.

12

13

14   The MAC117 coding sequence, as determined by

15   nucleotide and predicted amino acid sequence, is most

16   closely related to the erbB/EGF receptor among known

17   members of the tyrosine kinase family. The two genes are

18   distinct, however, as evidenced by the sequence diversity

19   and transcript size. Detailed structural analysis of the

20   complete coding sequence would further elucidate the role

21   and function of this v-erbB-related gene.

To this purpose we have isolated cDNAs with a complexity of over 4.5 kb

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from the MAC117 mRNA (Kraus et al., 1987). A restriction map is shown in

Fig. 5A. An oligo (dT) primed normal human fibroblast cDNA library (Okayama

and Berg, 1983) was screened with a 0.8 kbp Acc I DNA fragment from a genomic *the 3' terminus of*

clone of MAC117 (Fig. 1). The largest plasmid obtained, pMAC137, carried a

2-kbp insert comprising 1.5 kbp of 3' coding information and 3' untranslated

sequence. The remaining coding information upstream was obtained from three

phage clones, λMAC30, λMAC10' and λMAC14-1, identified in a randomly

primed MCF-7 cDNA library (Walter et al., 1985; Fig. 5A).

Fig. 5B illustrates 3 probes, a, b, and c, representing the 5' end, a middle

portion, and the entire coding region, respectively, which were employed in

subsequent studies elucidating the role and function of this v-erbB-related

gene.

To assess the role of MAC117 in human mammary neoplasia, we compared mRNAs

of 16 mammary tumor cell lines to normal human fibroblasts, M413, and a human

mammary epithelial cell line, HBL100. Increased expression of an apparently

normal size 5-kb transcript was detected in 8 of 16 tumor cell lines when total

cellular RNA was subjected to Northern blot analysis. An aberrantly sized

erbB-2 mRNA was not detected in any of the cell lines analyzed (Kraus et al.,

EMBO Journal 6:605-610,

1987). To quantitate more precisely the amount of MAC117 transcript in eight

mammary tumor cell lines which overexpress MAC117, serial 2-fold dilutions of

total cellular RNA were subjected to dot blot analysis using human β actin as

a control for the amount of RNA applied to the nitrocellulose filters. The

highest levels of MAC117 mRNA, which ranged from 64- to 128-fold over that

of our controls, were observed in the cell lines MDA-MB453, SK-BR-3, MDA-MB361, and BT474. Moreover, MAC117 mRNA levels were increased 4- to 8-fold in four cell lines including BT483, MDA-MB175, ZR-75-30, and ZR-75-1 (Fig. 6).

To determine if the overexpression of MAC117 mRNA resulted in a steady state increase of its encoded gene product, we developed a specific immunoblot assay. Antisera were raised against a synthetic peptide whose sequence corresponded to a portion of the putative tyrosine kinase domain of MAC117. As this region is partially conserved between the encoded proteins of the EGFR and MAC117 genes, we tested its specificity using A431 and SK-BR-3 cell lines which overexpress EGFR or MAC117 mRNA, respectively. As shown in Fig. 7A, a specific band of ~ 185 kd was detected in extracts of SK-BR-3 but not in A431 cells. This band was not detected when the antibody was preincubated with the synthetic peptide corresponsing to its antigen. To estimate the relative amounts of MAC117 protein in different mammary tumor cell lines, immunoblot analysis was conducted using equivalent amounts of total cellular protein. As shown in Fig. 7B, an intense band of protein was detected in extracts of SK-BR-3 and a less intense but readily detectable band in extracts of ZR-75-1. No MAC117 protein was detected in extracts of MCF-7, a mammary tumor cell line, that did not display overexpression of erbB-2 mRNA. We interpret these results to indicate that substantially more erbB-2 protein is found in both SK-BR-3 and ZR-75-1 than in MCF-7 cells where the amount of protein escapes the sensitivity of the assay. These observations indicated that elevated mRNA levels of MAC117 are translated into MAC117 proteins. This demonstrated that gene amplification of MAC117 results in overexpression of mRNA and protein of MAC117 in human mammary tumor cells. Furthermore, increased mRNA and protein levels are observed in mammary tumor cells in the absence of gene amplification suggestive

for an additional mechanism as a result of which mRNA and protein of our

novel v-_erbB_-related gene can be found overexpressed in tumor cells (Kraus _et_
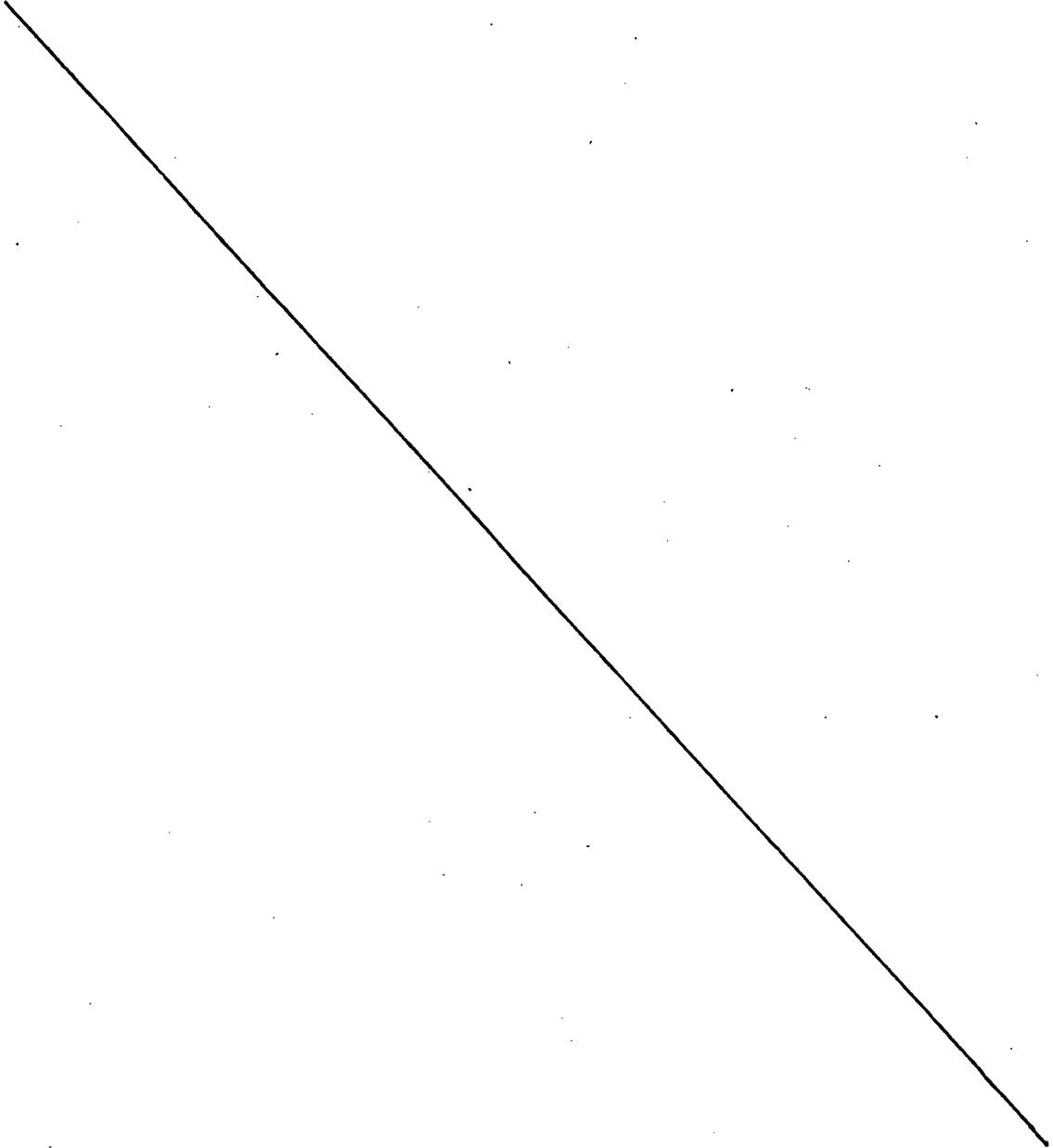
_al_., 1987).

To directly assess the effects of MAC117 overexpression on cell growth properties,

we assembled a full length normal human MAC117 clone from overlapping cDNA

clones (Fig. 5) _Figs. 5A,B_ linked to the transcriptional initiation sequences of either

the Moloney murine leukemia virus long terminal repeat (MuLV LTR) or the SV40

early promoter in expression vectors in order to express a normal coding

sequence of MAC117 in NIH3T3 cells (Fig. 9) (DiFiore _et al_., 1987). _Science 237:178-182_

Previous studies have indicated different strengths of LTR and the SV40

promoters in these cells (Gorman _et al_., Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 79, 6777,

1982). Because of the presence of the MuLV donor splice site close to the 5'

LTR (Shinnick _et al_., Nature 293, 543, 1981), we engineered one of the LTR-based

vectors (LTR-1/MAC117) to contain an acceptor splice site immediately upstream

of the translation initiation codon of the MAC117 coding sequence (Fig. 9).

This vector was constructed in order to ensure correct splicing of the message

even if a cryptic splice acceptor site were present within the MAC117 open

reading frame. In the SV40-based expression vector (SV40/MAC117) the _erbB_-2

coding sequence replaced the neomycin-resistance gene of pSV2/neo (Southern

_et al_., J. Mol. Appl. Genet. 1, 327, 1982) (Fig. 9). To assess the biologic

activity of our human MAC117 vectors, we transfected NIH/3T3 cells with

serial dilutions of each DNA. As shown in Table 1, LTR-1/MAC117 DNAs induced

transformed foci at high efficiency of 4.1 x 10^4 focus-forming units per

picomole of DNA (ffu/pM). In striking contrast, the SV40/_erbB_-2 construct

failed to induce any detectable morphological alteration of NIH/3T3 cells

transfected under identical assay conditions (Table 1). Since the SV40/_erbB_-2

construct lacked transforming activity, these results demonstrated that the
higher levels of MAC117 expression under LTR influence correlated with its
ability to exert transforming activity. To compare the growth properties of
NIH/3T3 cells transfected by these genes, we analyzed the transfectants for
anchorage-independent growth in culture, a property of many transformed
cells. The colony-forming efficiency of a LTR-1/MAC117 transformant was very
high and comparable to that of cells transformed by LTR-driven v-H-ras and
v-erbB (Table X). Moreover, the LTR-1/MAC117 transfectants were as malignant
in vivo as cells transformed by the highly potent v-H-ras oncogene and 50-fold
more tumorigenic than cells transfected with v-erbB. In contrast, SV40/MAC117
transfectants lacked anchorage-independent growth in vitro and did not grow
as tumors in nude mice even when 10^6 cells were injected (Table X).

To compare the level of overexpression of the 185-kd protein encoded by MAC117
in human mammary tumor cell lines possessing amplified MAC117 genes with that
of NIH/3T3 cells experimentally transformed by the MAC117 coding sequence, we
compared MAC117 specific protein amounts by Western blotting (DiFiore et al.,
Science 237: 178-182
1987). An anti-MAC117 peptide serum detected several discrete protein species
ranging in size from 150 to 185 kd in extracts of MDA-MB361 and SK-BR-3
mammary tumor cell lines, as well as LTR/MAC117 NIH/3T3 transformants (Fig. 10).
The relative levels of the 185-kd MAC117 product were similar in each of the
cell lines and markedly elevated over that expressed by MCF-7 cells, where
the 185-kd protein was not detectable under these assay conditions (Fig. 10).
Thus, human mammary tumor cells which overexpressed the MAC117 gene demonstrated
levels of the MAC117 gene product capable of inducing malignant transformation
in a model system.

Overexpression of proto-oncogenes can cause cell
transformation in culture and may function in the
development of human tumors. Amplification of a normal

1   ras gene or its increased expression under the control of

2   a retroviral long terminal repeat (LTR) induces

3   transformation of NIH 3T3 cells (Chang et al., Nature

4   297:479, 1982). Expression of the normal human

5   sis/PDGF-2 coding sequence in NIH 3T3 cells, which do not

6   normally express their endogenous sis proto-oncogene,

7   also leads to transformation (Gazit et al., Cell 39:89,

8   1984; Clarke et al., Nature 308:464, 1984). In Burkitt

9   lymphoma, a chromosomal translocation involving myc

10   places its normal coding sequence under the control of an

11   immunoglobulin gene regulatory sequence. The resulting

12   alteration in myc expression is likely to be causally

13   related to tumor development (Nishikura et al., Science

14   224:399, 1984). The observation of amplification of myc

15   or N-myc in more malignant phenotypes of certain tumors

16   has supported the idea that overexpression of these genes

17   can contribute to the progression of such tumors. The

18   erbB/EGF receptor gene is amplified or overexpressed in

19   certain tumors or tumor cell lines. The five- to tenfold

20   amplification of the v-erbB-related gene of the present

21   invention in a mammary carcinoma indicates that increased

22   expression of this gene may have provided a selective

23   advantage to this tumor. The isolation of a new member

24   of the tyrosine kinase gene family amplified in a human

25   mammary carcinoma in accordance with the present

26   invention, makes possible the elucidation of the role of

27   this gene in human malignancy.

1   <u>Use of Specific Nucleic Acid Probes</u>

2   As demonstrated in Figures 2 and 4, the isolation

3   and use of a Bgl I to Bam HI restriction fragment of

4   pMAC117 to specifically detect the gene and its mRNA

5   product has been set forth. The importance of this·

6   technique, involving this probe and others like it, is

7   that the biological functions of the gene described here

8   can be determined and these functions related to

9   practical application, some of which are listed below.

10   1.   Isolation of cloned cDNA. This involves the use of

11   probes specific for the gene described herein; an

12   example is the Bgl I-Bam HI fragment of pMAC117.

13   These probes are made radioactive by standard·

14   techniques, such as those noted above, and screening

15   of the libraries of cDNA clones is done using

16   standard methods analogous to those described in

17   "Cloning of λMAC117" above. This approach was employed

         to clone cDNA comprising the entire coding region of

         this gene, the restriction map of which is shown in

         Fig. 5A.

     2. Use of cDNA clones. Due to the fact that cDNA clones

         contain complete information for encoding the

         protein, these cDNA clones provide a "second

         generation" of specific probes for the gene described

         herein. Such probes are shown in Fig. 5B. Their appli-

         cation for hybridization analysis is demonstrated in Fig. 6

         and Fig. 8. As shown in Fig. 8, the availability of

         probes, such as probe a in Fig. 5B, facilitates the com-

         prehensive hybridization analysis of the entire coding

region of this gene or any defined part of it. In
addition, the complete coding information allows the
expression of the protein product in a
heterologous system. Such systems utilize strong
and/or regulated transcription promoters placed in
such a way as to direct overexpression of the gene.
Techniques for accomplishing expression of the gene
are well known in the art and can be found in such
publications as Rosenberg et al., Methods in Enzym.
101, 123 (1983); Guarante, L., Methods in Enzym. 101,
181 (1983).   The coding region of our novel v-erbB-
related gene was overexpressed under the transcriptional
control of MuLV-LTR or SV40 early promoter. Thereby, high
expression levels were achieved with MuLV-LTR which caused
the neoplastic transformation of transfected cells. These
cells can be used as a source to rescue infectious re-
combinant virus which might prove useful to infect
heterologous cells not susceptible to DNA transfection.
In addition, these cells serve as a source for high and
defined levels of antigen for this novel v-erbB-related
gene.

3.   Preparation of antibodies specific for the protein
product of the gene. Of course, the identification
and knowledge of the gene allows its product,
protein, for example, to be detected. Poly- or
monoclonal antibodies are prepared against said

protein by standard techniques, often by commercially
available services. The critical reagent in the
production of antibodies is the antigen (protein)
used. In this case, the antigens are either the
peptides chemically synthesized by standard and
commercially available techniques according to the
predicted amino acid sequences derived from the
nucleic acid sequence of the gene or its
corresponding cDNA. Another potential antigen is the
protein itself encoded by the gene and purified from
the heterologous expression systems as described
above. The antibodies are then employed by standard
immunological techniques for the specific detection
or diagnostic purposes. Such antibodies were raised against
a peptide representing amino acids 35 through 49 of the pep-
tide/~~sequence of Claim 4~~. The specificity of these antibodies
in detecting the gene product of this ~~nove. v-erbB-related~~
~~gene is~~ demonstrated in Fig. 7A. As shown in Fig. 7B and Fig.
10, these antibodies can be utilized to detect the over-
expression of the protein product of our novel v-erb-B-
related gene in human mammary tumor cells.

Further Applications of the Gene:

Having the knowledge of the gene allows preparing
specific nucleic acid probes to detect the gene described
here or its mRNA product. The probes are, of course,

derived from the gene, such as the Bgl I-Bam HI fragment of pMAC117 used in Figures 2 [handwritten: 2] and 4, or alternatively such probes are derived from other regions of the gene or its corresponding cDNA corresponding cDNA, as shown in Fig. 5A [handwritten: B/A]. The use of nucleic acid probes in the molecular diagnosis of human cancer has been documented (Taub et al., Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 79, 7837 (1983); Schwab et al., Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 81, 4940 (1984)). The finding that the gene described here is amplified in a human mammary carcinoma indicates that alterations occur to this gene in human disease. Thus, detection of the amplification [handwritten: or increase expression] of this gene provides useful diagnostic tools for the detection and treatment of human mammary carcinoma or other malignancies resulting from the v-erbB related gene. Hence, diagnostic kits which contain as their principal component specific nucleic acid probes for this gene [handwritten: or its mRNA transcript] are of commercial value. The probe is used in analyses similar in concept to those shown in Figure 2 [handwritten: 2] and Figure 4 for the detection of gene amplification structure or the expression of mRNA.

Specific antibody reagents (as described above) capable of detecting the protein product of the gene described herein are employed in a way similar to the use of specific nucleic acid probes. In other words, the expression of aberrant forms and amounts of a gene product is a measure of the related neoplastic condition

(Nishikura et al., Science 224, 399 (1984); Srivastava, et al., Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 82, ,38-42 (1985)). The detection of the aberrant expression of the protein product of the gene is of importance in the diagnosis of human cancers. As shown in Fig. 7 and Fig. 10, antibodies generated against peptides derived from ~~form~~ parts of the amino acid ~~sequence of claim 4~~ specifically detect the protein product of the gene ~~described in claim 1~~ in human tumor cells. Antibody reagent (produced as described above) is, of course, the critical reagent of the diagnostic kits for this purpose. Such antibody reagents are then employed in such standard methodologies as immunoprecipitation, western blot analysis, immunofluorescence analysis and the like well known in the art. The determination of amplification in a human mammary carcinoma of the gene described here indicates that overexpression (or other abnormality) of the protein product of this gene is functionally important, thus diagnostically relevant. This relevance is further sub- stantiated by the observations that gene amplification of this gene is associated with overexpression of its mRNA and protein in human mammary tumor cells and that protein levels observed in human mammary tumor cell lines exhibiting gene amplification of this gene are sufficient to induce neoplastic transformation of NIH/3T3 cells in vitro. Furthermore, a recent report (Slamon et al., Science 235:177-181, 1987) correlates gene amplification of this novel erbB-related gene with a reduced disease free survival in breast cancer patients, suggesting the potential usefulness of analysis of this gene for its gene product as a diagnostic parameter in the clinical setting

A diagnostic test in accordance with the present
invention involves, for example, material obtained by
surgical biopsy of potential tumor material. Such
material is then analyzed by one or more procedures as
follows.

1. DNA is isolated from the sample by standard methods
    (see above). The DNA is then analyzed by established
    methods, such as Southern blot hybridization using
    standard techniques similar to those used in the
    analysis shown in Figure 2. Gene-specific probes
    (described above) are made radioactive by standard
    techniques and used for detecting genetic
    abnormalities. Such abnormalities include gene
    amplification, as seen in the MAC117 tumor sample and
    tumor cell lines in Fig. 8. or gene rearrangement, as
    detected by aberrantly migrating bands of hybridization.

2. RNA is isolated from the tumor sample by standard
    methods (see above). This RNA is analyzed by blot
    hybridization techniques similar to those described
    in Figure 4. Gene-specific probes (described above)
    are made radioactive by standard techniques and used
    for detecting the mRNA products of the erbB-related
    gene described here. Such abnormalities include
    overexpression or abnormal forms of RNA. Overexpression
    of an apparently normal sized mRNA is shown in 8 human
    mammary tumor cell lines in Fig. 6. In addition, mRNA
    amount may also be quantitated by spot hybridization

procedures in which serial dilutions of RNA *are* ~~is~~ fixed to nitrocellulose filter and the mRNA of v-erb-B-related gene described here detected by hybridization. Such a procedure has been employed in Fig. 6B. The foregoing techniques are standard. This allows detection of mRNA overexpression or alteration of structure.

When antigens or proteins (polypeptides) are to be analyzed, the proteins are separated according to molecular size, for example by gel electrophoresis, transferred to nitrocellulose membranes and the protein product of the erbB-related gene described here detected by reaction with specific antibodies, described above. Such a test is able to detect alterations in the quantity of protein as well as abnormal protein forms. With such an approach protein levels of the v-erb-B-related gene have been detected in human mammary tumor cell lines (Fig. 7, Fig. *10* ~~11~~).

In addition, specific antibodies may be used in the analysis of histological sections. These techniques, which are well known for other antibody specificities, involve the thin sectioning of biopsied material from a potential tumor, followed by reaction with specific antibodies. The antibody-antigen reaction is then made visible by a variety of standard methods including labeling with fluorescently tagged or ferritin tagged

1   second antisera and the like. Such detection systems

2   allow the detection of the localized aberrant display of

3   the protein product of the <u>erb</u>B-related gene described

4   here.

5   In addition, although the demonstrated genetic

6   abnormality (shown in Figure X) of the gene described

7   here occurs in human mammary carcinoma, genetic

8   abnormalities may also be associated with other

9   clinically important syndromes of neoplastic or other origin.

10   Genetic abnormalities have long been known to be involved

11   in thalassemias, for example.

12   Knowledge of the <u>erb</u>B-related gene described here

13   also makes possible a means of cancer treatment. If it

14   is found that some cancers display abnormally high

15   quantities of the gene product on their surface, such

16   tumors can be treated with antibodies specific for the

17   gene product which have been conjugated to a toxic

18   substance, such as radioactive markers, biological

19   modifiers or toxins and the like. Another treatment

20   modality involves a similar assumption of

21   overexpression. In this approach, a specific natural

22   product, even if unidentified but which has high binding

23   affinity for the protein product of the gene described

1   here is used to target toxins to the tumor cells. This

2   treatment modality is supported by the finding, reported

3   here, of distinct but limited homology of this gene

4   product to the EGF receptor. If a ligand analogous to

5   EGF exists for the <u>erb</u>B-related gene described here, it

6   may serve as such a targeting agent.

7   <u>Diagnostic kits for the detection of the protein</u>

8   <u>product of the erbB-related gene.</u> Kits useful for the

9   diagnosis of human cancers having abnormalities of this

10   gene are now disclosed.

11   a) Kits designed to detect the protein by immunoblotting

12   These kits preferably comprise containers containing

13   (a) homogenization solution (50 mM Tris-HCl pH 7.5,

14   1% sodium dodecyl sulfate and 0.1% β-mercaptoethanol)

15   for the extraction of protein sample from biopsied

16   material from putative tumors; (b) reagents for the

17   preparation of immunoblots of the protein samples

18   (acrylamide gels are prepoured and contain 7.5%

19   acrylamide, .025% bis acrylamide, 0.38 M Tris-HCl pH

20   8.8, 0.1% sodium dodecyl sulfate; the nitrocellulose

21   sheets will be formed to the gel size; and transfer

22   buffer 0.25 M Tris-glycine pH 8.8, 30% methanol);

23   specific antibody reagents for the detection of the

1   protein product of the erbB-related gene (antisera

2   directed against the protein product of erbB- related

3   gene described here and reaction buffer containing

4   0.1 M Tris-HCl pH 7.5, 5.0 M EDTA, 0.25% gelatin,

5   0.1% nonidet P-40); and reagents and instructions for

6   the visualization and interpretation of

7   antibody-antigen interaction (these include

8   radioactive protein A; biotin conjugated second

9   antiserum, or peroxidase conjugated second

10   antiserum). While this kit includes components

11   ordinarily found and well known in the art, the

12   critical component is the gene product-specific

13   antibodies and buffers or media for performing

14   immunological tests. The antibodies are derived or

15   prepared as described above from either the peptide

16   sequence predicted from the nucleotide sequence of

17   the gene or its mRNA or from the protein product

18   itself through standard immunization procedures.

19   b)   Kits designed for the detection of the protein

20   product of the erbB-related gene in tissue sections.

21   Such kits include instructions for preparation of

22   sections; instructions and standard reagents for the

23   preparation of slides for microscopy; H_2O_2 for

24   removal of endogenous peroxidase; instructions for

25   incubation with antibodies specific for the protein

1   product of the erbB-related gene described here in a

2   buffer solution preferably containing phosphate

3   buffered saline; and second antibodies for detection

4   (these may be coupled to peroxidase, biotin, or

5   ferritin); and instructions for visualization of

6   detection complex. In addition the kits may include:

7   reagents and instructions for the preparation of

8   sections from biopsied putative tumor material;

9   specific antibody reagents for the protein product of

10   erbB-related gene described here and instructions for

11   its reaction with the tissue section; and reagents

12   and instructions for the detection of the

13   protein-antibody interaction either by

14   immunofluorescence, ferritin conjugated second

15   antibodies or other standard methods well known in

16   the art.

17   A Method for the Treatment of Human Cancers which Express

18   High Levels of the Protein Product of the Gene Described

19   herein.

20   This method involves administering to the patient

21   one of two types of reagent which preferentially binds

22   cells expressing high levels of the protein product of

23   the erbB-related gene described here. These reagents are

24   either antibodies directed against the protein product or

1   a ligand, which is likely to exist because of the

2   homology of the gene to a growth factor receptor. The

3   ligand is isolated by standard techniques using the

4   intrinsic protein kinase activity of the protein product

5   of the erbB-related gene. Extracts of body fluids and

6   cell culture supernatants are incubated with the protein

7   and γ-p^{32}ATP. The presence of ligand is inferred by

8   incorporation of p^{32} into the protein. The ligand is

9   then purified by standard techniques such as ion exchange

10   chromatography, gel permeation chromatography,

11   isoelectric focusing, gel electrophoresis and the like.

12   The natural ligand or antibody is tagged with one or more

13   agents which will cause injury to cells to which they

14   bind. Such tagging systems include incorporation of

15   radioactive or biological toxins. The present discovery

16   of amplification of the erbB-related gene makes it likely

17   that some tumors carry large amounts of the corresponding

18   protein. Hence, the two type-specific agents will bind

19   in larger amounts to the protein present in the body and

20   thus direct the toxic effects of the reagents to these

21   cells.

22   It is understood that the examples and embodiments

23   described herein are for illustrative purposes only and

24   that various modifications or changes in light thereof

25   will be suggested to persons skilled in the art and are

26   to be included within the spirit and purview of this

27   application and the scope of the appended claims.